

THE GREAT MARQUIS.

CHAPTER I.

COME hither, Evan Cameron,
 Come stand beside my knee,
 I hear the river roaring down
 Towards the wintry sea.
 There's shouting on the mountain-side,
 There's war within the blast;
 Old faces look upon me,
 Old forms go trooping past.
 I hear the pibroch wailing,
 Amidst the din of fight;
 And my dim spirit wakes again
 Upon the verge of night.

'Twas I that led the Highland host
 Through wild Lochaber snows,
 What time the plaided clans came down
 To battle with Montrose.
 I've told thee how the Southron fell
 Beneath their broad claymore,
 And how we smote the Campbell clan
 By Inverlochy's shore.
 I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
 And tamed the Lindsay's pride;
 But never have I told thee yet
 How the Great Marquis died.

(AYTOUN: *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers.*)

JAMES GRAHAM, Earl and afterwards Marquis of Montrose, was born in 1612. His family was one of the oldest and noblest in Scotland, and we hear of a Sir Patrick Graham, who was the intimate friend of Sir William Wallace, while another ancestor of our hero, also an Earl of Montrose, fell by the side of James IV. at the battle of Flodden Field.

I am sorry that I can tell you nothing of the boyhood of Montrose—but little or nothing is known of it. We only know that he lost his father at fourteen, and that his guardianship was entrusted to his brother-in-law, Archibald Lord Napier of Merchistoun. Lord Napier had married Lady Margaret Graham, an elder sister of the young earl, and acted the part of a loving father to the boy, who through life felt the strongest affection and reverence for him. Lord Napier had a son,

also called Archibald, but better known as the Master of Napier. You will hear more of him hereafter, and of his passionate devotion to the young uncle, who was to him far more like an elder brother. Besides Lady Napier, Montrose had three sisters: Lillias, married to Sir George Stirling of Keir, and Katherine and Beatrice. The last was an infant at the time of her father's death.

From what we know of Montrose's early life, we gather that he spent his boyhood chiefly in his country-place, on the borders of the Western Highlands. The name of his castle was Mugdock, situated near the lovely lakes of Lomond and Katrine. That part of the country was called Menteith, and was chiefly inhabited by loyal clans, related, however distantly, to the family and clan of Graham or Græme.

Here, then, no doubt, he used to roam over the blue hills and heathy moors, following the deer perhaps through the rocky pass of Glencroe, as far as Loch Fyne itself, and looking down from the heights on the old grey walls of Inverary, the residence of Archibald, Earl of Argyle, the chief of the mighty clan of the Campbells; but, while full of life and health, he devoted himself with all his natural ardour to these favourite sports, his education in other matters was not neglected; and under the paternal care of his brother-in-law, Lord Napier, he diligently studied the classics, or, as the Scotch would say, learnt his humanities.

So passed Montrose's boyhood; and when he reached his sixteenth year, you will perhaps be surprised to hear that he was married to a maiden a year younger than himself, Lady Magdalen Carnegie, the daughter of the Earl of Southesk. And the young husband and wife were still so entirely considered as children, that they were not allowed to set up an establishment for themselves, but were placed under the care of Lord Southesk. And the boy-husband was hardly seventeen when he found himself the father of a little boy. The birth of the heir gave great satisfaction, for Montrose himself was an only son.

They seem to have been a happy and affectionate family, living much together, the younger ones at least troubling themselves little about politics. Montrose and his nephew were like David and Jonathan, devoted to each other; there was only a difference of five years in their ages: they studied, shot, and fished together, and their friendship became later quite a proverb. Early marriages seem to have been the fashion in those days, for when the Master of Napier

was sixteen, he married Lady Elizabeth Erskine, the daughter of the Earl of Mar; and we find in after years that she quite shared this affection that her husband had for his glorious relative. But these peaceful days of childlike happiness could not last, and we almost lose sight of our hero, till we find him again, at the age of twenty-two, a widower, and the young father of three boys: Lord Graham, James, and Robert. It was either to divert his mind from his grief at the loss of his wife, or that his education was not considered perfect, that Lord Napier advised him to go abroad and see foreign countries, and thereby open his mind.

Where he travelled we do not exactly know; we only know that Italy was one of the countries he visited, for a record was found in a monastery at Rome that an Earl of Montrose and an Earl of Angus dined there on a certain day. He remained on the Continent for a year or two, and then returned home, full of renewed health and spirits, and anxious to be introduced at court, and see a little of London life.

Perhaps you would like a description of Montrose at this period of his life. Sir Walter Scott, in his "Legend of Montrose," says that he was not regularly handsome, but that there were moments when his soul looked through his eyes with all the energy and fire of genius. I have seen a picture of him in an old Cavalier house, which must, I think, have been taken of him at this time, before the toil and exposure of his campaigns had bronzed his brow and deepened the lines in his noble face. It is the happiest, most joyous countenance I ever saw; the nose rather aquiline, the eyes bright and blue; a small moustache shades the mouth, and wavy chestnut curls fall over his shoulders, after the fashion of the day. He was considered one of the most accomplished horsemen of the time; indeed, he was known at a distance by his perfect seat on horseback. He also spoke several languages well, and he became at once established as a favourite amongst his associates. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if he expected to meet with a favourable reception from the king, Charles I., more especially as he was to be presented by the Marquis of Hamilton, who happened to hold rather a high office about the court at this time.

He had a still better reason for hoping this, for his family had always been renowned for their loyalty to the House of Stewart. One

ancestor lay side by side with the brave and unhappy James IV. on Flodden Field; another, his great-grandfather, had been killed at the battle of Pinky, when the Barons rose against James V.; and his father had been left guardian of the kingdom of Scotland while James VI. was absent in England. Besides, it was at this moment the interest of Charles I. to be very courteous and civil to all those Scottish nobles who were attached to him, for it was just the beginning of his troubles. He was surrounded by enemies both in England, Scotland, and Ireland; not open enemies either, but secret foes, many of whom, while pretending to be very anxious to serve him, were plotting against him. But Charles was one of those unfortunate men who are sure to do the wrong thing at the wrong moment; and even when he wished to be conciliatory, his manner was stiff and unbending, more like that of the Spanish princes, which he had greatly admired on his visit to Spain. It is also conjectured that Hamilton had, for reasons of his own, secretly indisposed the king against his young countryman, for when Montrose approached, the king carelessly held out his hand to him to kiss, and then turned away to resume a conversation he was holding with some one else. Montrose was deeply mortified, for the slight was as marked as it was public. Instead of staying in London, as he had intended, he went off to Scotland at once in a fit of pique. He arrived at Edinburgh in a discontented mood, his quick, warm feelings wounded; and the enemies of the royal party saw at once that he was just the man for them, if they could only get him on their side: clever, brave, full of energy, and full of genius, they thought he would make an admirable leader to the popular party.

But, before I go on with my hero's history, I must tell you something of the state of things in Scotland, that you may understand my story better.

CHAPTER II.

"To my true King I offered without stain
Courage and Faith. Vain faith and courage vain!"

(LORD MACAULAY.)

It was only a year or two before Montrose's visit to London that Charles I. had greatly offended the Presbyterian party in Scotland by endeavouring to introduce the English Prayer-book and Services into the churches. The people would not hear of it, created great disturbances, and were very unruly. The king at length went to Scotland

himself, to try and soothe the minds of the malcontents. This was in the year 1633. He was very well received, apparently, by the leaders of the party who opposed episcopacy. Those two leaders were men who played a great part in the history of the Scottish Rebellion, and not at all an honourable part; their names were, the Earl of Argyle and the Marquis of Hamilton. I shall often have occasion to refer to these names again. Argyle was, without a doubt, the most powerful nobleman in Scotland at this time. He was the head of the mighty clan or family of the Campbells, and his home, the old Castle of Inverary, was situated in one of the loveliest spots that could be seen in Scotland. Close on the shore of Loch Fyne, whose waters mingle with the sea, stood the grey stone castle, the huts of the villagers clustering round it for protection, the surrounding country peopled almost entirely by Campbells, and shut out from the neighbouring clans by steep heathy hills. There were hardly any roads in Scotland at that time, and such as there were, were little better than tracks, and very often impassable in winter to any but the hardy mountaineers.

Argyle was much beloved by his own clan, for he had done all in his power to make them rich, and he ruled almost like a sovereign prince in his own fastnesses, where it was his proud boast that no enemy dared to penetrate. In person he was dark, tall, and slender, with a sinister expression of countenance; and a slight cast in his eye had obtained for him the Gaelic name of Gillespie Gruamach, which means literally "Squinting Archibald." His own people gave him a grander title, *Mac Callum Mohr*, or "the Son of Colin the Great;" Colin having been a mighty ancestor of the Campbells, and a friend of Robert Bruce, while the whole clan gloried in calling themselves the sons of Diarmid, and are addressed in the song of "*Flora M'Ivor*" as

"Ye sons of brown Diarmid, who slew the wild boar,
Resume the pure faith of the great Callum Mohr."

The second leader of whom I spoke, the Marquis of Hamilton, was a very different kind of personage. His character is one which seems to have puzzled historians, so different are the accounts which have been given of it; but he appears to have been a vain, selfish man, whose only anxiety was about his own interests.

We will now return to our history. After King Charles had tried to introduce episcopacy into his native kingdom of Scotland, a number

of the Scottish nobles and Presbyterian clergy resolved that no such attempt should be made again. They therefore drew up what they called the Solemn League and Covenant, by which they all agreed to defend the rights of their country and their own kirk against the aggressions of the Bishops, putting in at the same time a sentence to express that they meant to be very loyal to the king all the while. This covenant was drawn up in imitation of one which had been made in the reign of James VI., and which that king had signed himself, though not very willingly. "The Solemn League and Covenant" was declared to be a mere repetition of the first; but this was hardly the truth; for, notwithstanding that clause about loyalty to King Charles, it was highly rebellious in its spirit, and so it was intended to be by the crafty Argyle and the Earl of Rothes, who were at the head of the whole proceeding.

It was about this time that the young Earl of Montrose came from London, as I have said, not in the best humour in the world with the royal party. He was immediately received with the greatest courtesy and affability by several of the Presbyterian or Covenanting Lords, as they were soon afterwards called, chiefly by Leslie, Rothes, and Argyle. They did all they could to get him on their side; they told him that the Solemn League and Covenant was merely intended to promote the interests of the king and the good and happiness of Scotland; and that, if he would only sign his name with theirs, success was certain. Montrose was young, enthusiastic, and inexperienced; his vanity was flattered by the general kindness and deference which was shown him on all sides; and being, moreover, assured by all that the king's interest was one of the chief things considered, he agreed to what they recommended, and signed his name to the Solemn League and Covenant. Meanwhile, in England, the affairs of the king were going on from bad to worse. The Long Parliament was sitting, and was becoming daily more powerful and more encroaching in its demands. It was the year 1641, and Charles had sent for the Earl of Strafford from Ireland to take the command of his army, when the Parliament affected great alarm that the king was about to march upon London, and turn out the Parliament (as Oliver Cromwell did not many years later), so they sent off in a great hurry to the Scottish Parliament to send their army to help them.

For I must explain that all this while the Scottish Parliament,

generally called the Scottish Estates, had levied a large body of troops, which they had placed under the command of Montrose. They had before this been sending Montrose about the country with orders to insist upon every town through which he passed subscribing to the Solemn League and Covenant.

Accordingly our hero rode through some of the southern counties with a blue scarf over his shoulder, obeying these orders with great zeal. But, though most of the towns thought it wisest to comply, there were some who were by no means disposed to do so.

There lived in the Highlands an old nobleman, George Gordon, Marquis of Huntly. Instead of signing the covenant, he collected a little army of his own vassals, and led them against Montrose; but his plans were baffled, and he was obliged to yield himself prisoner, together with his eldest son, Lord Gordon. Montrose was as kind to them as his peculiar position would permit, and not many years later he and Lord Gordon became the fastest and dearest friends. The old marquis, however, did not share the generous disposition of his son, and he showed a jealousy and dislike of Montrose which in after days proved very unfortunate. Huntly had five sons, George Lord Gordon; James Viscount Aboyne; Ludovic, Charles, and Harry. When his father and elder brother were made prisoners, Aboyne took the command of the Gordons, assisted by his brother, Lord Ludovic, a wild boy of thirteen, who escaped from his grandmother's charge at Gordon Castle, and joined the royal army, as it now called itself. The brothers were, however, defeated in a sharp skirmish, and their followers dispersed.

Montrose felt but little pleasure or satisfaction in the performance of his duty at this time, nor did he receive any encouragement from his employers; but, on the contrary, was blamed and censured by Rothes and Leslie and the Estates for the mildness and gentleness of his measures, and they soon sent for him to return to Edinburgh.

He did not remain long there, for he was despatched immediately with the army which the Scottish Estates had raised at the demand of the English Parliament. This army was put under the orders of General Alexander Leslie, and Montrose commanded a portion of it. They marched to the Borders, but a truce was agreed upon almost immediately, and the Scots retired again. During the truce King Charles sent for Montrose, and had several interviews with him at

Berwick. The subject of their conferences is not exactly known, but it is certain that from that time Montrose seems to have liked less and less the party under which he was serving. But, before many months passed, the war between the king and the Scottish Estates broke out again with greater violence than ever. It was now some time that Montrose had been thinking that it was rather strange that the Estates should always profess so much their loyalty to the king while they were levying armies to fight against him. But, deeply troubled as he was by these perplexing thoughts, he was still bound by his engagements, though he was beginning to see clearly that Argyle had purposely deceived him. However, when the Scots reached the Tweed, Montrose, anxious to hide from them what was passing in his mind, made a great show of zeal, dismounting from his horse and wading through the river twice to encourage them. But there was again no fighting this time, and the Scottish army marched quietly back again. '

But Montrose had changed his mind about many matters. One day he was visited at his own house by several friends, amongst them his brother-in-law and guardian, Lord Napier, the Master of Napier, his nephew, and another nephew, Sir George Stirling of Keir, and a good many more. They had a long and earnest talk together, and then they drew up a paper called the Bond of Cumbernauld, and in this paper they resolved that they would not have anything to do with those who had signed the Solemn League and Covenant, so long as they showed themselves hostile to King Charles. This bond was drawn up in secret; but, unfortunately, it came to the ears of Argyle. The covenanting Marquis was furious; he had never truly liked Montrose from the beginning; their characters were so different in every way; and, in truth, Montrose liked him as little. Unfortunately for our hero, Argyle was in power, and he, immediately upon hearing of the Cumbernauld Bond, locked up Montrose, the two Napiers, and Stirling of Keir, in the old Castle of Edinburgh, and then he accused them to the Estates of being traitors, and expressed himself very anxious that they should all be hanged, but particularly Montrose.

But Montrose did not make himself unhappy about his imprisonment; indeed, it was very difficult to depress his spirits under any circumstances. He knew well enough that no case of high treason could be proved against him; but he knew also that Argyle and Rothes

would have his life if they could get it, and that he must be very careful in his defence, and not allow himself to say anything rash.

He was kept in prison with his friends for a considerable time; and though they were all confined in the castle, they were never allowed to see one another. During this period they were all brought up before the Estates for examination at different times; but Montrose defended himself so well, and so clearly proved his innocence, that Argyle could not succeed in getting him condemned. But he kept him still shut up in the old castle, and there the young earl lingered out the days and weeks wearily enough, till news arrived that King Charles was about to pay his second visit to Edinburgh. The king came, and his visit was a blessing to our prisoner, for the result was that Montrose was set at liberty, though on the condition that he should leave Edinburgh, and that he should not come within six miles of any place where the king was.

Montrose went at once to his own estates in the country, and remained there for several months, educating his sons, looking after his tenants, and arranging his affairs. Time passed on, and in his beautiful Highland home Montrose watched the progress of events, waiting till the time should arrive when he might come forward from his retirement and take his part in public life once more. And that time came at last.

(To be continued.)

RATHER A LONG WALK.

(Continued.)



BEFORE the sun was well down, I was sharing a good supper of salt mutton, tea, and damper with him, and telling him how it was that I had come his way.

He was, of course, very glad to see me, as he would have been to see any one, but we soon found out another reason for taking kindly to one another. He told me that he was a Cambridge man; and as I had been at Oxford, we had, of course, many things to talk about.

Many persons would have pronounced this man to be a little "wrong in his head," if not quite mad, for in the middle of a sentence, or

whenever the whim struck him, he would break out into long quotations, perhaps from Virgil, or Shakespear, or Homer, stalking up and down the while and looking very fierce. But I knew very well what was the matter with him: he was rather "cranky," or peculiar, from living so many months alone, and, as he told me, he forgot at such times that there was anybody near him.

I stopped there that night, and he insisted on my stopping the next day; for he declared he had not seen a civilized man for the last five years, which was very probable.

So the next day the sheep went their way (when a flock have been long in one place they need little looking after during the day), and we sauntered off and sat in the shade, or climbed a spreading plum-tree to rest among the branches.

We called up a good many old recollections, and discoursed learnedly about many things. After supper we played a game of cribbage, with a bar of soap for a board (and a very capital makeshift it was). He had saved all his old trouser buttons to make a set of draughts, and had painted a very creditable board. This old shepherd (for he looked rather old and worn) was as neat and methodical in his ways as a woman, and his hut and all his belongings were pictures of neatness.

And the reason he remained a shepherd, and was fit for nothing else, was, that he used to spend all his money every six months at the nearest public house (fifty miles away): this he told me himself. I am sorry to say that there are many more that resemble him in this.

He gave me a pair of very good boots, and in the morning before I started he went out with a shovel to the corner of the yard and began to dig. I could not make out for a long time what he was doing.

Presently he brought up an old tin match-box, and opening it, discovered some pieces of paper, one of which he handed to me: it was a cheque for two pounds. He would not listen to my remonstrances. "You see," said he, pointing to the box, "this is my last three months' pay, and I have buried it there in my bank until the six months are up, when I can spend it; it will only be a glass or two less for me; I shan't miss it when I'm drunk, and it will help you on the road."

What could I do but take it? I saw that it would only offend him to refuse. He told me that if I followed the river fifteen miles down I should reach the head station. He walked a little way with me, as if loth to part, and then turned disconsolately homewards. I never

saw him any more, poor fellow; he may be there now, or he may be dead and buried, wrapt in a sheet of bark, under some gum-tree. We *must* all meet some time or other with such kindly chance acquaintances, in whom we *must* take a real interest, and whom we fancy we could grow so fond of, but the parting we cannot help, it is one of the evils (as we call them) of life.

You see, if I had gone down the creek, I should have had to go fourteen miles or more. I reached the station about four o'clock, but I met with the same answer: "they were full-handed."

The next station was seventy miles away; but there was a shepherd's hut on the road, "if I could find it."

I received ample directions for this said "finding," but they were rather perplexing. I was to cross three large creeks with oak trees (colonial oak) growing in them, and red banks, and just before I came to the fourth I was to strike off to the right, when I should find about half a mile from the road a "chain of water-holes," where the hut was.

I was in hopes, however, that the shepherd would have his sheep somewhere near the road. After crossing the first red creek with oak trees I began to doubt about finding the hut, for these creeks seemed to cross the road every quarter of a mile, whereas I had been told that the third was at least eighteen miles away. (These *oaks* are more like some kind of fir-tree in appearance, but the wood is something like oak, very hard and "close.")

I knew that my only chance was that of meeting the sheep or the shepherd; but I walked all day, and the bush seemed as lonely as if it had never been disturbed.

I began to get very thirsty, and at last reached a water-hole in the bed of a creek, but there was a dead bullock in it. However, with the help of my two tin pots, I strained some of the water through a piece of my blanket, but I did not like to drink much; so I lighted a fire and made some tea, a process which takes no time at all in the bush.

There was about an hour more of daylight, when I saw all the ground "padded" with sheep tracks; but it was so late that I did not dare go off the road, so I made up my mind for a night in the bush.

The "road" now left the flat country, and I was travelling again among stony ridges.

The wind began to rise, and feel unaccountably cold, and I was not pleased to see a pile of black clouds rising fast in the *opposite* direction. I knew this meant a thunderstorm. The air had been very sultry

all day; but it was cold enough now. I had not long to wait. The sky was quickly all black, and the air was nearly as dark as night. The next moment, all the "bush" seemed in a blaze, and I was almost blinded and deafened at the same moment. The blue jagged lightning seemed to burst into balls of fire within a few feet of me, and the "crackling" and roaring of thunder was incessant.



I had never seen a tropical storm in all its fury before. This lasted about ten minutes, then down came the rain, not in drops, apparently, but in a regular sheet of water. The lightning was over.

It was no use going on thus, so I picked out a gravelly ridge, where

the water would run down on both sides, unpacked my blankets; rolled myself up on the ground, and determined to make a night of it.

This may seem like "taking it easy," but what else could I do? all the road, such as it was, was washed away, and I could scarcely see my hand before me. When the rain first soaked through my blankets, it felt rather cold; but after that I began to feel quite warm, steamy and comfortable. I was soon sound asleep, for I was very tired.

I often think of it now, and can hardly realize that I lay thus, once, a whole night like a bundle of wet rags, in the wild bush, and that no one either knew or cared anything about it.

All night long it rained, for although I did not wake till morning I felt it in my dreams every now and then. Just at daybreak the clouds rolled away, and before the sun rose the sky was clear and glorious. When I woke I was rather stiff at first, but I soon felt quite fresh and jolly.

It seemed impossible to feel anything else on such a beautiful morning. I wrung the wet out of my blankets, and set about lighting a fire to make some tea—which was all the breakfast I could promise myself. I had some matches in a little tight tin box in my pouch, and I got sufficient dry stuff to light, by stripping off part of the outside bark from a fallen tree, and collecting the stringy stuff inside; this I managed with my knife.

I had no trouble in getting water, as it had collected in every little hollow; and I soon had a potful of it boiling at a roaring fire. But when I went to look for my bag of tea, it was gone! I had wrapped it up carefully, with the other small possessions which I have mentioned before, in my spare shirt, and placed the bundle in a hollow log. I found that, during the night, the log had become a water-course, or rather water-pipe, and everything had been washed away—goodness knows where. So I had to be content with chewing a bit of tobacco, which I carried in my pouch, for breakfast.

I found the comb down below, broken in two between two stones, I suppose by the force of the stream. I also found one or two leaves of the Church Service; but I never found the rest of my property.

I started at once to go on, as I did not know how far I should have to go before I got anything to eat—I judged about thirty-five miles.

When I got on to the flat country again, it was about six inches deep in water, and very heavy and boggy. My boots here became well soaked, and when I got on the stones again they began to go to pieces.

The soles came half off, and kept flapping and doubling under my feet. I cut up one of my blanket straps and tried to repair them, but it was no use, so I had at length to throw them away. I was now bare-footed (for no men wear stockings in the bush), and I must have been an extraordinary figure. Bare-footed, my canvas trousers, once white, stained with earth of different colours, and all manner of defilement, my shirt not much better, while above all my broad-brimmed cabbage-tree hat drooped and flapped about my head. But I did not think of that so much, as my chance of getting a dinner or supper.

When I went over the stones they cut my feet, and when I got off them the black mud poisoned the wounds, so that I began to limp rather. However I kept on. By mid-day I felt as if I had walked for a month, but I dared not stop to rest. I had no relish for another night in the bush.

About three o'clock I got clear of the hills altogether, which was a good sign; and, better still, there was now a regular beaten track, and many trees had been stripped of their bark for roofing.

About four, I saw a bark hut ahead of me with two sheep-yards. I don't know whether you can fancy my disappointment when I found the hut empty. It appeared to have been deserted some time.

Although every mile made me more tired, every sign of the nearer presence of men gave me fresh spirits. But when I came to a black fellow's spear stuck upright in the middle of the road, I felt farther off than ever. I did not touch it, as the prints of naked feet were around it.

I began to feel rather weak, and I thought, "If I don't reach the station to-night, I shall die in the bush!" which was another reason for getting on as fast as I could.

Presently a man—the first I had seen for two days—came galloping along the road.

"Good-day, mate."

"Good-day."

"How far am I from the station?"

"Four miles."

This was all that passed, and he galloped on his way; but I had heard all I wanted, and now I could take it easy.

Those last four miles seemed longer than all the rest, and by the time I reached the station I could hardly crawl.

When I had had a good supper, I felt very jolly in mind, but so

stiff and sore, that I thought I should never be able to walk any more. I asked leave of the overseer to stop a day and rest—which was readily granted. He also took pity on me, and gave me a pair of boots. I had intended to buy them with part of the Cambridge shepherd's money; but he would not let me pay for them.

My pilgrimage was not yet over, but I had now reached a district where the stations were pretty close together.

I met with some bullock drivers, who allowed me to travel with them; and in return I used to light the fire and cook for them. I had a horse to ride, and drove the spare horses and bullocks with the drays.

This was comparative happiness. We went about nine miles a day, and took long rests in the middle of the day, when we had dinner.

The country, too, was much pleasanter; there was a good plain road, and no hills, but gentle slopes covered with green grass after the rains, and all the trees and even the ground were full of life.

The drivers had a gun, with which we used to shoot a pigeon here and there, or a turkey; and every water-hole was crowded with ducks of various sorts.

The drays were carrying wool down to a port, where there was a cotton and sugar plantation; and there, I was told, I was certain to get work.

I was glad to hear this, and did not care much what sort of work it was, for I thought to myself, no work can be so hard as tramping about looking for "shepherding." I need not describe the rest of the journey; we had the same incidents and accidents every day: sometimes the dray stuck fast in the mud, and before it was got out cost the drivers much swearing (I am sorry to say), and the bullocks much flogging; sometimes the bullocks strayed away in the night, and we had to waste a day in looking for them.

It all ended happily for me, at last. I got employed at once on the plantation. The work was easy, and the life pleasant. Some other time you may hear from me about that, and other things.

I reached the plantation just six weeks after I had sold my false tooth. I had travelled three hundred miles, of which two hundred had been done on foot in a fortnight, and seventy in two days.

Altogether, I think I was right in heading this paper, "Rather a Long Walk."

GEORGE CARRINGTON.